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RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF. *Digest of Laws and Journal of Proceedings*. (Compiled by H. B. Meyers.) Pp. 1507. Chicago: Traffic Service Bureau, 1912.

The National Association of Railway Commissioners, whose membership includes the personnel of the forty-three state railroad and public utility commissions of the United States, as well as the Interstate Commerce Commission, will hold its twenty-fifth annual convention this year. Governmental regulation of public service corporations, which began in the states about 1870, has been an important field for administrative action by both national and state authorities during the last quarter of a century which measures the life of this important association. Legislative action has preceded the creation of these administrative bodies, and frequent amendments to public service laws have been necessitated by judicial decisions, so that both statute books and court reports now contain a great volume of laws and opinions concerning the powers and duties of railroad and other corporations doing business of a public nature.

In order to ascertain the present status of this legislation or the interpretation which is placed upon it by the courts, it has been necessary to have recourse to a law library supplied with the session laws of the various states as well as the state reports. Even then the task was often tedious enough. In recent years scarcely a legislative session has been held without the passage of numerous statutes regulating public utilities, and the compilations are so infrequent that in order to find what the law is upon a particular subject, reference to a number of volumes of session laws is often necessary.

These difficulties have to a considerable extent been minimized by the National Association of Railway Commissioners. With the report of the proceedings of its twenty-third annual convention, it has incorporated a valuable compendium of the national and state public utility laws, together with a digest of federal and state court decisions which interpret these laws.

The compilation of statutes is particularly valuable, giving as it does the complete context of the federal and state laws regulating public service corporations, revised to January 1, 1912. While no indexes are provided, the statutes are arranged by states and the headnotes are given in italics so that enactments relating to a particular subject are readily found. The order of the codes or revised statutes is followed, the section numbers being shown. Complete references are furnished to laws passed since the publication of revised statutes.

Although in the case of some relatively unimportant laws, nothing is given except the headnotes and a reference to the section numbers, the work appears to be thorough and comprehensive. Such constitutional provisions as relate to the subject precede the statute laws, and following the federal acts are the rules of practice before the Interstate Commerce Commission, together with the forms adopted by the commission for use in proceedings brought before it.

Apparently the compilation is designed primarily for the use of the commissions, which are seeking to bring about uniformity and harmony in legislation and administration. It should, however, prove a convenient reference book for legislators, corporation officers, patrons of public utilities, commercial and civic organizations, dealers and investors in public utilities, and students.

The digest of decisions, which occupies a relatively small part of the volume, relates primarily to common carriers. It is designed to be a summary of the more important decisions of the courts involving the powers and duties both of the interstate and state commissions. In an effort to make this portion of the work more valuable than a mere digest, frequent quotations are made from the opinions of the courts. The decisions are grouped under suggestive headings. While a topical headnote in italics precedes the statement of each case, the absence of an index and the difficulties encountered in making a logical arrangement under a general head do not facilitate reference to particular subjects. This difficulty is not so noticeable in the case of those federal decisions which relate to the act to regulate commerce and are conveniently arranged under the various section numbers.

This digest has the merit of embracing in small space a statement of the fundamental powers and limitations, with reference to each other, of both the state and national governments in the regulation of public service corporations. It is intended merely as a guide to the law on the subject, and as such is a valuable supplement to the compilation of statutes which it accompanies.

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RAPER, CHARLES LEE. *Railway Transportation*. Pp. xi, 331. Price, \$1.50. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912.

When Stephenson's invention in 1829 assured the success of steam railway transportation, the United States was a well-established nation, able to develop its own lines independently of European assistance. Indeed the problems of construction and operation were quite different from those abroad. At the very outset English locomotives were found to be unsuited to American conditions, and the manufacture of engines began in this country almost with the construction of the roads. In our policies of regulation, we have not been so independent, but have in many respects profited by the results of English experience.

Nevertheless, our own problems have presented themselves with such insistence that, particularly in recent years, the literature of the subject has dealt primarily with the local situation. Meanwhile developments of a most interesting nature have been taking place abroad. On the continent at least, railway problems are being handled by methods which differ radically from our own.

Professor Raper has recognized this situation. His book is a study of both American and European railway transportation. It has the merit of furnishing an up-to-date review of the conditions in those countries which have made the greatest advances in transportation, and of presenting a parallel statement of the results.

The first half of the book considers the historical development of railway lines, general conditions of traffic, service and rates, and the "ideals and machinery of state control" in Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany. A more detailed, but comparatively brief account of American railway transportation is followed by a chapter on state operation, in which the results achieved in Belgium and Austria, as well as the other countries named, are treated. The last part of this